

CITY OF LOUVAIN

RISE FROM ASHES

Inhabitants, Working Under Direction of Mayor, Repairing Damage Wrought.

By CARL W. ACKERMAN.

LOUVAIN, Belgium, May 11 (by Mail).—Louvain is full of surprises and filled with pathos. One is surprised to find at least seven-tenths of the city untouched by the fire which the German army kindled to suppress sniping warfare. One is surprised to see the Hotel de Ville still standing with not a trace of smoke, fire or shell. The beautiful carved statue facade is as white as paper. One is surprised, too, to see the progress the inhabitants are making in cleaning and rebuilding their ruined city.

But all this cheerfulness in a city that was thought to be dead almost covered up by the pathetic faces of the inhabitants whose homes were ruined. I traveled through Louvain today by automobile. I tramped through the center of the city, examined the interior of the cathedral and later rode through the city on foot. Everywhere I saw the blocks of brick walls, pierced and blackened, but which one day were homes and stores. Louvain is undoubtedly a martyred city.

Thousands Shot By Snipers. Colonel Burmann, of the German army, who was our guide, was one of the first Germans to enter Louvain. He knows the history of the fighting and fire better than probably any other soldier now in Belgium. No one pities Louvain and its inhabitants more than this big German officer. The fire was started, he said, only as a last desperate effort of the Germans to stop the sniping warfare. Thousands of Germans, he declared, were shot down as they marched through the city. In the cathedral alone he said the Germans found 50 Belgian rifles and many boxes of ammunition.

Today the art treasures of Louvain are securely packed in the basement of the Hotel de Ville. The city is under the safety of these priceless works to a young German art student who was with the invading army. When this boy, who has studied in Louvain University, heard that the city would be set afire, he rushed to the commander, and told him of these valuable treasures. This youth then mapped out the location of the treasures and under his guidance they were removed from the burning territory to the basement.

Cathedral Half Destroyed. I was told that most of the paintings from the cathedral were saved, but as I tramped about in the ruins I counted six large oil paintings on the walls of the church, but entirely unharmed. The cathedral appears to be white half destroyed. On one side the pinnacles and beautiful black-and-white marble altars are untouched. On the other only the bare stone walls remain. The church chimneys have fallen from the left to the cathedral floor and broken into a score of pieces.

But Louvain's ruins are guarded as precious treasures by the inhabitants. The only souvenirs travelers pick up are postcards and the dust on their shoes.

Should one wish a bird's-eye view of Louvain, imagine a city shaped like a large wheel, with ten spokes running from the axle to center. Picture the cathedral, Hotel de Ville, and Louvain University around the hub. The spokes are city streets, and between are the houses and stores, for Louvain was a city of 40,000 people. Imagine, then, that a fire swept away the houses between three spokes and destroyed everything around the hub except the Hotel de Ville and the cathedral. Then you will see Louvain today.

Trying To Rebuild City. Now stand before the Hotel de Ville and look to the west. Not a house or building is touched by fire or shell. A short distance away read the sign: "Cafe de Wilson." Now turn to the left, and you see the city streets untouched and crowded with inhabitants. Business going on as usual. Nearby you read another sign: "Hotel de American." In a nearby restaurant you will find bread as white as you eat in America, for it is bread made from American wheat which the Belgian relief commission is supplying.

Down the street which we travel en route to Brussels you will see workmen piling up bricks from the ruined houses—for the inhabitants, headed by the mayor, are trying their best to rebuild the city.

Louvain is full of surprises and filled with pathos. But from what I saw today, I do not believe it is a dead city. It will rise some day out of its ruins, for with seven-tenths of the city untouched by fire or shell, with the beautiful Hotel de Ville still standing, it inspires the people, it needs only peaceful, normal times to grow and prosper.

MacVeagh's Secretary Is Granted Divorce

CHICAGO, July 15.—A check for \$1,000 torn into bits. A note which read: "Dear Francis: I am sorry, but what you propose is utterly impossible. Dead things cannot be revived and grow again." Winifred MacVeagh.

These formed the reply to a proposal for a reconciliation made to his wife by Francis Winthrop Taylor, former aide-de-camp and secretary to President MacVeagh, when he was President Taft's Secretary of the Treasury.

The torn check and the note were produced today in Judge J. C. O'Connell's court where Mr. Taylor sued for a divorce on grounds of desertion. The divorce was granted.

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